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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

WASHINGTON

September 16, 1959

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Completion and Announcement of  
IRBM Agreement with Turkey during  
Khrushchev Visit

On September 10 our Embassy in Ankara was authorized to open negotiations with the Turkish Government for an agreement on the deployment of IRBMs in Turkey. Draft texts of a proposed U.S.-Turkish agreement were transmitted to the Turkish Government for its consideration. Prior to the opening of the U.S.-Turkish negotiations, the Turkish Government had indicated to SACINUR its readiness to accept his recommendation for deploying IRBMs in Turkey.

Our Embassy in Ankara now reports that the Turkish Government has accepted, apparently without change, the draft proposed by the United States. Our Embassy also reports that the Turkish Foreign Minister, Mr. Zorlu, is very anxious to sign the agreements before Saturday, September 19, when he departs for the U.N. General Assembly in New York. It may be technically possible to complete all arrangements on the U.S. side in time to permit signature this week, although the mechanics are such that this is not certain. In any event, we should be ready to sign in the very near future. At the time of signature, it would be normal practice to issue a brief press statement, subject to Turkish agreement, announcing that the U.S. and Turkey had concluded an agreement on the deployment of IRBMs and implementation of the NATO Heads of Government decision of December 1957 to equip NATO forces with the most modern weapons possible, including ballistic missiles. At the present time, the date of the second press conference has not been determined.

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IRBMs in Turkey during the Khrushchev visit. On the other hand, the deployment of IRBMs for Turkey is part of the long-agreed program for making the most modern weapons available to our NATO allies. Implementation of this program has been carried forward at the normal a regular rate without allowing the program to be impeded by Soviet actions. Agreements on IRBMs and atomic stockpiles have been signed as soon as negotiations were completed; failure to do so would have delayed the actual deployment of the missiles. Therefore I therefore believe it would not be wise to delay the way in implementing this particular step in the program because of the presence of Khrushchev in the United States. Furthermore, it is impossible to predict now whether circumstances might be better after the Khrushchev visit; they might well be less favorable than those which now prevail.

I would appreciate your approval of the above.

Christian A. Herter